THE UNIT SYSTEM OF JUDGING PLANETARY INFLUENCES

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The Unit System of Judging Planetary Influences

Students of Astrology and perhaps those who are old in the work also, are frequently at a loss to know how to judge conflicting aspects in the Progressed Horoscope. Sometimes there may be a long string of these, all occurring at the same time—Progressions, Lunations, Eclipses, Transits, etc., some of them good, some bad; some of them in harmony with aspects in the Natal Chart, others at direct variance with such aspects.

So far as the writer is aware, no scientific method of judging conflicting aspects has heretofore been evolved, or at least such method has not been reduced to definite printed form so that it may be studied. The existing authorities on The Progressed Horoscope, valuable though their work is, seem to rely largely on what may be termed rule-of-thumb methods and on their own experience.

Now experience is undoubtedly one of the greatest assets the Astrologer can possess. All who have read Horoscopes for many years know how skilled in interpretation they become as the result of constant practice. Yet by its very nature experience can come only with time and it seems urgently necessary that some definite method of weighing and balancing differing types of aspect be placed in possession of the student. It is probable that such method may have a very considerable value even for the practiced Astrologer who has felt the need of some more tangible system of judging aspects than has heretofore prevailed.

The suggestions herein made are based upon almost ten years of continuous practice both in teaching Astrology and in interpretation. It is not claimed that they represent the last word on the subject—there will probably never be a last word—but that they afford the best method yet devised for formulating a definite judgment as to the weight to be allowed to conflicting aspects. They are also an indication of the

strength of influences which are nonconflicting.

The writer's experience has taught him that some of the old-time authorities are prone to exaggerate the effect of solitary influences. A progressed opposition or square of Saturn or Mars is stated to be "very evil in effect" to bring "great misfortunes," etc., without any reference to how Saturn or Mars is aspected in the Natal Chart. Any competent Astrologer knows that if the malefic aspect were for instance a square of the progressed Moon to Saturn, and in the Natal Chart Saturn and the Moon were in close trine, the effect of the progression would be almost nil. Yet the beginner is led to anticipate an evil influence which does not exist simply because of the loose way in which catalogues of influences are gotten up in many works on Astrology.

With this in mind the writer has evolved the "Units of Influence" method of judging progressed aspects. This method is also applicable with modifications to the Natal

Chart but the system herein given has to do only with the Progressed Horoscope. A "Beginners' System" is given first and it is recommended that the new student accustom himself to judging progressions by the simple rules set forth before proceeding to the more complicated method formulated under the title "Advanced System." The one leads naturally into the other and the Advanced System is in fact built on the few simple principles the "Beginners' System" covers. It is the writer's hope that the science of Astrology may be greatly benefited by this attempt to grapple with what has long proved a serious stumbling block to the new student.

BEGINNERS' SYSTEM

NOTE.—*For convenience the word progression is used to signify any kind of direction and includes transits and eclipses.*

Rule 1.—If the Progressed Influence is of the SAME NATURE as an aspect in the Natal Chart, count *3 units of influence.* Example:

☉*p* △ ☽*r* where ☉ is ✳ or △☽ in Natal Chart.

Rule 2.—If the Progressed Influence is between planets not in any aspect either good or bad in Natal Chart, count *2 units of influence.* Example: ☽*p* □ ♂*r* where ☽ is in no aspect to ♂ in Natal Chart.

Rule 3.—If the Progressed Influence is between planets which have an OPPOSITE TYPE OF ASPECT in the Natal Chart to that which now forms by progression, count *1 unit of influence.* Example: ♅ transiting □ P*r* where ♅ is △ P in Natal Chart.

Rule 4.—If the Progressed Influence is between planets which have a conjunction or parallel in Natal Chart, count *2½ units of influence.* Example: ♃ as Planetary Ruler △ ♀*r* where ♃ is P ♀ in Natal Chart.

Rule 5.—If the Progressed Influence is between planets which have an aspect in the Natal Chart of the *same* nature as the progression and also are in parallel in the Natal Chart, count *3½ units of influence.* Example: ☽*p* ☍ ☿ where ☽ is □ ☿ and P ☿ in Natal Chart.

Rule 6.—If the Progressed Influence is between planets which have an aspect in the Natal Chart of an *opposite* nature to the progression and also are in parallel in the Natal Chart, count ½ *unit of influence.* Example: ☉*p* △ Ψ*r* where ☉ is ♌ Ψ and also P Ψ in Natal Chart.

In listing the current directions make 2 columns, heading one "Good" and the other "Bad." Set down in each column the prevailing aspects and the units of influence each carries, then subtract the lower total from the higher and the result will readily indicate whether *general* influences preponderate for good or evil. An example is given herewith:

GOOD	UNITS	BAD	UNITS	NOTES
		☽*p* □ *MCr*	2	No asp. in Natal
☉*p* P♃	3			☉✶♃ " "
		♂ Planetary Ruler □P*r*	3	♂♂P " "
Lunation	✶☉ 3			☽△☉ " "
Lunation	✶♂ 3			☽△♂ " "
		Asc.*p* □ Asc.*r*	2	No asp. pos. "
	9		7	

The result is 9 units of good against 7 of bad so the general influences lean somewhat on the side of the good.

It should be borne in mind that the houses, signs and planets affected *must* be taken into account for a detailed interpretation. However the above method will be very helpful to the beginner and will enable him to keep a proper sense of perspective in summing up the net result of the prevailing influences, without unduly rating either the good or the bad.

ADVANCED SYSTEM

It will probably have occurred to any skilled interpreter who may have read the foregoing that enough attention has not been given to the closeness or otherwise of the Natal aspects and to the placing of the planets in the Natal signs, whether in Exaltation, Detriment, etc. This is true, the reason being that it was deemed advisable in outlining a system for beginners to give merely the essentials, leaving the finer points of judgment for the Advanced System.

The plan suggested above will, however, form the base on which the more detailed

scheme can be built. In general it will be found accurate and may be used with good results even by experienced Astrologers where time is lacking or a meticulously accurate interpretation is not required.

The writer has always taken exception to the indiscriminate listing of platic aspects without any indication as to the number of degrees by which they are inexact. It cannot be other than unscientific to give a solemn pronouncement on the evil of ☉□☽, quite overlooking that they are out of orb by 10° and would have probably less than one tenth the power of the same aspect if exact. For this reason we introduced the custom many years ago of writing the number of degrees by which an aspect is inexact in parenthesis whenever the aspect was listed or mentioned: thus ♀△♂(5), meaning that the aspect is "out of orb" by 5°. An Astrologer glancing even casually over a Chart thus treated can immediately pick out the exact or close aspects which are the real factors in a Horoscope and when giving a quick delineation ignore

those which are of minor importance because far out of orb.

Exact aspects have tremendous power. As the number of degrees by which an aspect is inexact becomes greater so the power of the influence diminishes. It is difficult to hazard exact figures but an attempt must be made if the purpose of this work is to be achieved. The quickest and most easily understandable method appears to be to assign what may be called "sub-units of influence" to each aspect. The word sub-unit is used to avoid confusion with the units used in the "Beginners' System" and also because these "sub-units" are subordinate to the units on which the judgment must be mainly based.

The writer wishes to avoid assignment of arbitrary values to these sub-units but as no standard exists outside of the Cosmic Mind by which absolute values may be arrived at, and as even the examination of a million horoscopes and the million life histories that go with them, would still be unavailing, all that can be done is to make

an honest attempt to be as accurate as possible.

The values given therefore represent the writer's reasoned judgments, though other Astrologers may have differing views. At least it is better to have something of a definite nature to pin to rather than leave the matter of judging the exact strength of aspects in its present nebulous condition. This must be the writer's excuse for making the attempt.

It is suggested then that aspects be given sub-units of force ranging from 1 to 7 with an exact aspect counting as 7 and an aspect 7° out as nothing. If to the ☉ or ☽ the maximum number of sub-units should be 10 instead of 7 due to the greater importance of aspects to the luminaries, ☉ and ☽ having also greater orbs than the planets. An aspect 10° out should therefore count nothing. The following will serve as examples:

	Sub-units	
♀ △ ☿	(0)	7
"	(1)	6
"	(2)	5
"	(3)	4
"	(4)	3
"	(5)	2
"	(6)	1
"	(7)	0

	Sub-units	
☉ ♂ ☽	(0)	10
"	(1)	9
"	(2)	8
"	(3)	7
"	(4)	6
"	(5)	5
"	(6)	4
"	(7)	3
"	(8)	2
"	(9)	1
"	(10)	0

10 sub-units should equal one unit and be added to the units of influence estimated by the method set forth in the "Beginners' System."

The aspects referred to of course are those in the *Natal Chart*, not the aspects formed by direction.

The next thing which must be considered is the difference to be allowed for the variation in strength between a sextile and a trine, and a square and an opposition. The writer does not believe that a trine is twice as powerful as a sextile as held by some As-

trologers. His view is that the sextile is about two-thirds as effective as a trine and a square two-thirds as damaging as an opposition.

This being the case if the above aspects were ☿ ✳ ♀ (instead of △) and ☉ □ ☽ (instead of ☍) our sub-units would be modified as follows:

Sub-units			Sub-units		
☿ ✳ ♀	(0)	5	☉ □ ☽	(0)	7
"	(1)	4	"	(1)	6
"	(2)	3	"	(2)	5
"	(3)	$2\frac{1}{2}$	"	(3)	$4\frac{1}{2}$
"	(4)	2	"	(4)	4
"	(5)	1	"	(5)	$3\frac{1}{2}$
"	(6)	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	(6)	3
"	(7)	0	"	(7)	2
			"	(8)	1
			"	(9)	$\frac{1}{2}$
			"	(10)	0

NOTE.—Conjunctions have about $\frac{1}{2}$ the value for good of a ✳ and for bad of a □. Do not figure less than $\frac{1}{2}$ a sub-unit.

A planet in its Essential Dignity or Exaltation acts more powerfully for good and less powerfully for evil than if placed elsewhere. A planet in its Detriment or Fall acts more powerfully for evil and less powerfully for good. Some Astrologers consider the Exaltation to be stronger than the Essential Dignity and the Fall than the Detriment. Others claim the opposite. The writer's view is that there may be a slight difference in strength but close observation of many Horoscopes fails to disclose that it is at all considerable—not enough in any case, to indicate in terms of sub-units so no difference will be made in estimating the extra power of Essential Dignity and Exaltation which will be considered as equal. The same applies to Detriment and Fall.

A 50% increase in sub-units should be allotted therefore where planets are found in these signs natally. The writer is sure that this is the maximum variation in strength for which such placing is responsible. If anything he feels it errs on the

liberal side but after mature consideration has decided to allow it to stand.

If therefore in the above example ♀ were in ♓ (its Exaltation) all the sub-units would be increased by one-half. Should two planets be in aspect to each other and both in Exaltation or Dignity then the sub-units should be doubled.

If ♀ in the above case were in ♈ (its detriment) one-third should be deducted from the sub-units. If one planet be in Detriment and another in Exaltation the increase and decrease will cancel out and should not be considered.

If the aspect be to a malefic in its detriment ADD the sub-units if the Natal aspect be bad—subtract if good. If to a benefic in Exaltation add if good, subtract if bad. Thus—

☉*p* △ ♄ *r* (In the Natal Chart ♄ is in ♌ (Detriment) and ☉ ✳ ♄ (3). Regular value of ☉ ✳ ♄ (3) is $4\frac{1}{2}$ sub-units. The Natal aspect is good so we subtract one-third or about $1\frac{1}{2}$ sub-units leaving the value of the aspect 3 sub-units instead of

the $4\frac{1}{2}$ it would have been had ♄ not been natally in his Detriment.

If however the Natal aspect were ☉ □ ♄ (3) in ♌ and the progressed aspect was ☉*p* □ ♄*r* we should add one-half to the regular $4\frac{1}{2}$ units making it $6\frac{3}{4}$ or for quick computation 7 sub-units.

If the progressed aspect in the latter case were ☉*p*△ ♄ we should still add one-half by reason of ♄'s malefic placing at birth. The conflicting nature of the progressed aspect as compared with the Natal would be adjusted as explained in the "Beginners' System" where it counts for only one unit, and this would be almost wiped out by the 7 sub-units of evil influence leaving only 3 sub-units of good as the measure of the power exerted by ☉*p* △ ♄*r* where ☉*r* is □ ♄*r* in Detriment. As evidence of the scientific exactitude with which this method has been worked out, probably any practiced Astrologer would admit that this is just about all such a progression would count for as against the very adverse nature of the Natal Chart aspect.

A progressed planet in its own Dignity, Detriment, etc., probably exercises a rather greater or less power for good or evil than if traversing some other sign. Scientific logic would require this but the writer has never been able to discover much difference. ☉*p* in ♎, though in its Fall seems to act about the same for good as in ♏ or ♍, though a difference is noticeable as against its action in ♌ or ♈, its Dignity or Exaltation. If one-fourth be added where the progressing planet falls in Dignity or Exaltation and one-fifth deducted if in Detriment or Fall the needs of the case will probably be met.

The final factor to be considered is the differential to be allowed for varying types of directions. How much stronger should ☉*p* be considered than ☽*p*? How strong is ☉ as Planetary Ruler or by 7 year cycle etc.? What about Eclipses, Lunations, Transits? The rule appears to be that the more infrequently an aspect is likely to occur the more powerful it is. However, this rule must be applied with caution.

$\odot p$ moves only 3 signs in a lifetime of 90 years while $\mathfrak{D} p$ in a like period has moved more than three times around the Horoscope. $\odot p$ therefore moves with only about one-twelfth of the rapidity of $\mathfrak{D} p$, yet no Astrologer would claim that $\odot p$ was an influence 12 times as strong as $\mathfrak{D} p$. As a matter of fact aspects formed by $\odot p$ do not manifest until "touched off" by a similar aspect of $\mathfrak{D} p$ or of a Lunation, though a good $\odot p$ aspect will color the period over which it extends, for general good while a bad $\odot p$ aspect will do the reverse. One full unit added for a $\odot p$ aspect is, in the writer's opinion, sufficient to cover its extra strength as against $\mathfrak{D} p$ or other aspects.

Eclipses are unquestionably of immense power and their influence extends until the next Eclipse, when it ceases. The writer finds no warrant for holding that its influence covers as many years as the Eclipse lasts hours. Such a notion appears to be purely fanciful. No one disputes that the influence of a Lunation holds until the next

Lunation. Eclipses are merely very powerful Lunations and a similar law should logically apply. Many observations show that it does apply. Add 2 full units for a Solar Eclipse and 1 for a Lunar Eclipse. If either Solar or Lunar Eclipse is visible at the place of birth it acts with double power. In that case add 4 units for the Solar and 2 for the Lunar.

☉ by 7 year cycle is powerful. Add 1 full unit.

MC progresses at same rate as ☉*p*. Add 1 unit.

Asc. progresses about $1\frac{1}{2}$ times as fast. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ unit.

All other types of direction are in about the same class as ☽*p*. Planetary ruler appears to be slightly stronger but not enough so to justify additions of even $\frac{1}{2}$ a unit and we want to avoid smaller fractions as tending to unnecessary complication. Transits of the faster moving planets have little effect. However transits of ♇, ♆, ♅, ♄ and ♃ are as powerful as progressions of ☽ and should be so considered. Pro-

gressions of ♀ and ☿ are unimportant. ☉ and ☽ by transit merely mark the exact days on which prevailing major aspects materialize. By themselves they indicate only insignificant events.

It is hoped that this attempt, the first so far as is known ever to have been made, to assign definite values to the many varying types of direction may be of real assistance both to the beginner and to the advanced student. A good deal of it is equally applicable to Natal Chart interpretation but its special purpose is in connection with the Progressed Horoscope. Pioneer work in this field has been badly needed and now that a start has been made perhaps others may be encouraged to continue these researches which must inevitably lead to increased knowledge.